

REMARKS

Claims 3 and 4 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 2 were previously cancelled. Claim 3 has been amended. Claim 3 is in independent form.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §112

2-3. Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

The Examiner states that the limitation “simultaneously forming a seal gasket around the peripheral edge of the shell while molding the shell in the mold die” finds no support in the original application as filed. In response, Applicant has amended claim 3 to include the limitation “molding a seal gasket around the peripheral edge of the shell in the mold die” which finds support in the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 26 of the original application (paragraph [0048] in the published application). Thus, the rejection is now moot.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §103

4-5. Claims 3 and 4 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,505,506 to Kleefeldt in view of European Publication 940,241 to Schneegans. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

First, the Examiner contends that Kleefeldt discloses a plurality of actuating members (13, 16) hinged to an actuating pin (12) for operating a lock. In response, Applicant notes that Kleefeldt discloses a pawl (13) mounted on a first pivot (12) that is formed by a tab (12') that is punched out of and bent up from a plate (2). See column 3, lines 7-19. Similarly, Kleefeldt discloses a fork (16) mounted on a second pivot (15) that is formed by a tab (15') that is punched out of and bent up from the plate (2). See column 3, lines 20-30. Clearly, the pawl (13) and fork (16) are not mounted on the same first pivot (12) as the Examiner contends.

Second, neither of the cited references disclose a method for fabricating a supporting assembly including the steps of placing a first metal plate into a mold die and

molding a shell to the first metal plate in the mold die, as specifically required by claim 3.

As noted above, the Examiner contends that the fork (16) in Kleefeldt is equivalent to an actuating member in the present application. The Examiner also contends that the fork (16) in Kleefeldt is equivalent to a first metal plate 8 in the present application. Applicant notes that the fork (16) in Kleefeldt is equivalent to a fork 15 in the present application. The fork 15 is set forth in claim 3 as one of a plurality of mobile members. The first metal plate 8 is also set forth in claim 3. The fork (16) in Kleefeldt cannot be equivalent to the first metal plate 8 because this is clearly a separate component from the fork 15 in the present application.

Third, the Examiner contends that Kleefeldt discloses a method including the steps of placing a first metal plate (16) into a mold die, inserting an actuating pin (12) into the mold die which is separate and spaced from the first metal plate (16), and molding a shell (5) to the first metal plate (16) in the mold die and around the actuating pin (12) to englobe the actuating pin (12) in the shell (5). There is no disclosure in Kleefeldt that the fork (16) is placed into a mold die or that the housing (5) is molded to the fork (16), as the Examiner contends. Rather, a steel plate (2) with a bent up tab (15') is surrounded by an integral collar (15'') of synthetic-resin material unitary with a floor (6) of the housing (5). The fork (16) is pivotally disposed on pivot (15). It is clear that the fork (16) is mounted on pivot (15) after the housing (5) is molded to the steel plate (2).

Finally, if the fork (16) is placed into a mold die and the housing (5) is molded to the fork (16), as the Examiner contends, the functionality of the door latch in Kleefeldt would be destroyed. More specifically, the fork (16) is mounted on pivot (15) which allows the fork (16) to pivot. If the housing (5) is molded to the fork (16) the fork (16) would be prevented from pivoting and the door latch would not function.

The Examiner contends that Schneegans discloses co-molding a seal gasket. Clearly, the cited references do not disclose each of the steps set forth in claim 3. Further, the cited references do not teach or suggest each of the steps set forth in claim 3.

Claim 4 depends from amended claim 3 and, as such, is construed to incorporate by reference all the limitations of the claim to which it refers, *see* 35 U.S.C. §112, fourth paragraph. Amended claim 3 is allowable for the reasons set forth above. Thus, claim 4 is allowable.

Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection of claims 3 and 4 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Kleefeldt in view of Schneegans be withdrawn.

It is respectfully submitted that this patent application is in condition for allowance, which allowance is respectfully solicited. If the Examiner has any questions regarding this amendment or the patent application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fee associated with this Communication to Deposit Account No. 50-1759. A duplicate of this form is attached.

Respectfully submitted,



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